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SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 1913.

A MONTH OF DEMOCRACY.

A month ago yesterday Woodrow Wilson became President of the United States, and the Democracy, after sixteen years' absence from power, was restored to control of the executive and legislative branches of the government. Thirty-one days have passed, yet nothing has happened to justify in the least the calamity-howlers. The prophets of disturbance and destruction are discredited.

Review the month. There has been brought about a distinct return to some measure of simplicity in the government. A good working Cabinet has been appointed, every member of which seems to be conducting his office in a manner not spectacular, but eminently satisfactory to the country. Real reforms in the various departments have been commenced. Comparatively few appointments have been made, but the appointees in every case have received the general approval of the nation. President Wilson's vigorous action in reference to the Chinese loan saved the United States from a situation that might have involved it in great embarrassment. The position of this republic toward Mexico has been so lucidly defined that it cannot be misunderstood. Business is undisturbed. The administration has made a splendid start.

The first month, however, was not the period of test. Democracy is upon the threshold of its crisis. What has been achieved so far has been accomplished by the executive department. The legislative branch of Democracy now comes upon the field, and upon what it does hangs the future of the Democratic party. By its fruits shall the Democracy be known. Clouds are already drifting across the skies. Democratic combinations against the fulfillment of Democratic pledges have been effected; the special interests represented by Democratic Senators have formed their lines of defense. Not Republicans, but Democrats, will lead in the attempt to repel the Democratic assault upon the tariff wall behind which privilege is making desperate and determined stand. Log-rolling is beginning its work against the enactment of the pledges of the Democrats into law.

The hour of trial approaches. If the Democratic party now fails to measure up to its supreme opportunity, then its doom is sealed. If the same spirit of wisdom and fidelity to duty that has characterized its first month guides it in the extra session of Congress, it will emerge stronger than ever before, but only by the fulfilling of its promises to the people can the Democracy survive.

OUR LAX CITIZENSHIP.

An impression has existed that lax citizenship is more prevalent in the large cities of the North than elsewhere in the country. The situation revealed in Richmond by one of its leading newspapers shows that the South is by no means immune to a form of civic indifference that is menacing democratic government, national and State as well as municipal," declares the Christian Science Monitor of Boston. The condition which evoked this criticism is that fully 5,000 of the 15,000 qualified voters of this city will control the whole political machinery here this year, although they constitute but one-third of the males eligible to vote. Five thousand men whose poll taxes were paid last spring refused to cast their ballots in the primary. The Monitor goes on to say:

The public offices of Richmond, we are informed in this connection, have for years been filled by persons elected by the voters of the city. The representative citizens of the community, but the class of electors least desirous of giving the municipality good government. Self-interest compels these to pay their poll taxes, to qualify as voters and to vote. Those engaged in ordinary business and making professional pursuits take no trouble to do any of these things as a rule. They are, apparently, uninterested in public affairs. They seem to regard the exercise of the franchise as the greatest political privilege that has come to the mass of the people as something beneath them. Most appropriate to this situation, indeed, is the term political immorality.

In 1912 a new election law imposed a poll tax of \$2 on every voter who neglects his duty at the polls. The rule has been to penalize the citizen who does his duty by imposing upon him a poll tax of \$1. It is not possible to say that good citizenship is dependent on reward or penalty, but it would seem to be expedient for communities making so poor a showing as Richmond—and there are many others North and South—to drop the poll tax altogether, to make voting a process subject to as little inconvenience as possible. Right-minded men, it is true, should require no incentive to vote, but since lax citizenship does exist, it is not unreasonable to suggest that the right-minded citizen might be tempted to abandon mere theory and take to the practical in an effort to protect itself. The truth of the matter is, the average American community, North and South, is in much need of an aggressive political morality.

The suggested remedy is not a novel one. It has been frequently proposed in the Virginia press of late. The abolition of the poll tax seems inevitable. If it would mean a larger and

a more interested electorate, no time should be lost in doing away with it.

RICHMOND AND THE RAILROADS.

The last thing that Richmond should consider possible is a controversy with the railroads that would result in nothing but loss to each side. What we need is co-operation and careful planning to enable the city to grow normally and the railroads to share in the inevitable fruits of that growth.

The principal question to be decided is how to remove tracks and yards, grade crossings and other sources of inconvenience and danger from the streets where they do not naturally belong; and, second, to provide ample and complete terminal facilities for passengers in the location best suited to the needs and future of the city. It is clear that these two ends are bound together to some extent and that they involve problems of grave and far-reaching import. So complex and important are these issues that as a preliminary to everything else The Times-Dispatch urges a policy of caution, careful planning, with expert advice, and the adoption of a judicial, impartial attitude, free from preconceived notions and merely personal elements.

We certainly welcome the news that the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad intends to attack its share of the work very shortly. We wait with interest the announcement of specific plans, and we think the other railroads should take this opportunity of arranging a comprehensive scheme for handling both freight and passenger traffic. The suggestion that the main station of the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac be located on West Broad Street emphasizes the need for a union station. With the Chesapeake and Ohio, Seaboard and Southern entering the Main and Fourteenth Street region, and the Coast Line and Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac some two miles distant in the West End, it is plain that delays, expense and inconvenience will be multiplied.

There seems to be a growing sentiment in favor of the Broad Street terminal. Whether this is wise we do not here attempt to say. But it is evident that the city is hampered by the tracks across its main western street and through the section from there to Byrd Street Station. The companies, too, have found that the present arrangement cripples their operating movements. The natural logic of physical conditions dictates that this much of the problem needs prompt attention, for the sake of the community and the railroads.

ONIONS FOR HEALTH AND WEALTH.

The onion's opportunity has come at last. For decades it has been scorned and ignored, although it cannot be denied that it has made its presence smelt. The high cost of living has raised the onion at last to knight-hood in the vegetable kingdom and given it higher honor than the order of the garlic. The United States government officially offers a remedy for high prices of foodstuffs in recommending to housewives that they buy onions in more copious quantities for the table. The tender white bulb, with its slender stalk, is abundant and cheap nearly everywhere, and, if it cannot be had cheap in any locality, Uncle Sam volunteers to inform all queers that where onions may be secured at low prices.

Onions are declared to possess great value as food, having an uncommon amount of calories, and being especially beneficial to most persons in preserving their health. Remember the saying of our old-fashioned grandmothers: "An onion a day keeps the doctor away." Uncle Sam apparently endorses that health rule. Hetty Green, our richest woman, publicly does, asserting that the onion makes one healthy, wealthy and wise.

Much of the common prejudice against the onion is because of its progressive fragrance, yet that objection can be removed if the proper culinary process is adopted. Onions may be cooked in such a way that they will not offend the olfactory nerves. The method involves care and intelligence, but the economy effected in the use of this magnificent vegetable makes such trouble well worth while. Although, in the opinion of the epicure, the allium cepa is best served in puris naturalibus, there are a hundred other ways of preparing it. The finest soup in the world is onion potage.

It is significant and altogether appropriate that, after long years of patient waiting, the onion and the Democratic party came into power at the same time. The onion is the most democratic of vegetables; it is the food upon which many an imperial American man bath grown great.

ANNEXATION BY TALK.

Can Richmond by talking and one acre to its territory? If we may judge by the amount of talk without any expansion, it cannot. Greater Richmond cannot come by waiting. It must come by working. However unanimous public opinion in favor of annexation may be, unless it takes form in a concrete proposal for a definite new corporation line, we gain nothing but practice in oratory.

Practically every organization of citizens in Richmond and the suburbs has declared in favor of making the city's size commensurate with its needs and importance. Indorsements, resolutions and recommendations have been forwarded to the Council. All the arguments and comparisons have been made. The verdict has already been rendered. Yet nothing is done.

The subcommittee of the Council has met once and adjourned. Does this committee intend to meet again and begin active work for annexation? Is it studying the problems presented and preparing to recommend a specific plan of annexation to the Council? Or is it waiting for further prodding by citizens and organizations?

The evil results of the short-sighted refusal by certain Aldermen of the 1909 appropriation for funds to make a survey and maps are now apparent. A new boundary cannot be laid off by

guesswork from an automobile. It must be decided by careful study and the adjustment of many claims. Without funds even the most energetic committee can do little. Will it be necessary for Richmond to take up a subscription and hire an engineer and come with a plan already outlined before we get results? If so, let us make a map of what we want and give the authorities a definite something to reject. If they do nothing else, it is not very good advertising for Richmond to appear unable to grow, even when the necessity is admitted.

THE "DEMONSTRATION" AGAINST MONTENEGRO.

There is nothing surprising in the belief of the Vienna newspapers that some of the powers are not honestly supporting the program for the coercion of Montenegro, and their suspicions that Russia, especially, is not acting in good faith. It would be still less surprising if in the end their belief and suspicions were sustained. There is good ground for both. In the circumstances, the powers had to make a show, nominally kept faith with one another on the issue of creating Albania into an autonomous state, and demanding that the siege of Scutari be raised and the Montenegrins abandon all claim to it. To Austro-Hungarian policy of "Albania for the Albanians"—save the mark!—they are diplomatically committed.

But under such conditions as now prevail, and in view of the undercurrent of conflicting interests and jealousies, there is room for many a slip between the cup of diplomatic commitment and the lip of physical vindication thereof. There are many significant signs of half-heartedness and bluff and tentative assumption of responsibility in the projected naval demonstration.

Germany's Foreign Minister, in explaining his government's attitude in Balkan affairs, has frankly admitted that Germany gave adherence to the program, virtually, solely to Austria-Hungary's request. That Germany is not an enthusiastic participant can be readily understood in the light of the fact that in the event of Austria-Hungary's going to war to enforce her Albanian policy, and a not impossible uprising of Slavs in the dual monarchy, there might develop a situation—a conflict might be precipitated—in which Germany would have to face two ways.

Russia has grudgingly given an eleventh hour assent to the program, but upon the plea that she has no ships she can conveniently send to the scene, has deputed France to act for her—a commission the latter has accepted with a string to it. Italy, by reason of the same alliance obligation that prompted Germany, has consented to co-operate, but her co-operation is in the face of potent dynastic matrimonial ties and widespread public opposition, while Great Britain, having favored the proposed Albanian status, as calculated to make for future peace, could not do less than unite with the other "mediators."

But the combination is a loose-jointed and indefinite one at best. The program represents the proverbial chain that is no stronger than its weakest link. Should one link snap, what then? The answer would seem that the whole European adjustment would be dicated. Meanwhile, however, given, for the sake of argument, that the powers are sincere, it may well be that it is still a far cry to the demonstration being rendered effective. A naval demonstration against Montenegro is pretty much on all fours with a naval demonstration against Switzerland. If the fierce and hardy and heretofore unconquerable Montenegrins fail to yield, if they prove insensible to the moral effect of "the blockade," what then?

Austria-Hungary's only recourse would be to throw an army into Albania, back of which and around which would be millions of Slavic sympathizers with the Montenegrins—sympathizers not confined to the other allies, but scattered and in some places congested in her own possessions. In view of the Pan-Slavic revival among the Russian masses, how long would Russia, the particular erstwhile patron of Montenegro, ignore that opportunity? How long would Italy be able to resist the pressure of popular leaning to the cause of Montenegro, and repugnance to her remaining in the triple alliance?

The more carefully the situation is analyzed the clearer it would appear that Scutari, instead of dooming the Montenegrins to coercion, to the assurance of settling the Albanian issue in the interests of the peace of Europe, may but light the spark of a Balkan conflagration involvement in which none of the powers would be able to escape. The demonstration may prove more pregnant with danger to the great peace preserver than to the "insignificant little" peace disturber, whose rights the powers would wrest from her in gross injustice, in the integration, and in order to placate an utterly selfish bully. Already Serbia, in loyalty to her ally, has accentuated this aspect of the coercive movement by making common cause with Montenegro in defying Austria-Hungary to do her worst. In truth, Serbia has, moreover, challenged the powers to uncover their real hand; has forced a crisis in which the showdown cannot be delayed and will be awaited with intense anxiety; for in some respects the situation is more acute and tense than has been the case at any time since Montenegro started the Balkan hostilities by taking the initiative in declaring war upon Turkey.

Professor Taft bids fair to be a very popular member of the Yale faculty. Almost time for yachting on the James.

The reason Richmond women wear no veils is that it would be sinful to hide such beauty.



On the Spur of the Moment

By Roy K. Moulton

From the Hickeyville Clarion.
Constable Ezra Hickey, our local sleuth, had his pocket picked the last time he was over to West Hickeyville, and says he has got a good clue to the culprit, who secured a nickel's worth of Mule Ear Ties, a bone collar button, the key to the Hoptown Jail and 18 cents in real money. Ike Butts is takin' the fresh air cure and is sleepin' in his corner. There ain't nothin' the matter with him at present, but there probably will be if he keeps up the treatment long enough.

Abe Renfrew's wife has quit him and now he is liable to be pinched for havin' no visible means of support. There is some talk of startin' a moving-picture show in our midst, and the drama is lookin' up considerable. There hasn't been a show since the magic lantern lecture on the Catacombs of Rome by some stranger from away. William Tibbitts refused to go, sayin' it must be a fake, as nobody ever combed a cat.

Mrs. Eli Haskins has saved up enough soap wrappers to get a chiny closet and hopes in ten or twelve years to save up enough more to get a hand-painted pickle dish or something to put in it.
Smokin' and chewin' has been forbid at the meetin' house during services and Hank Purdy says this reform wave which is sweepin' over the country is certainly fierce and personal. Liberty is gettin' to be a dead letter.

Hi Higgins says he has got the rheumatiz, jumpin' neuralgia, hummers and shingles and two of his cows have died. The mortgage has been foreclosed on his west forty, his well has gone dry, two kids have got the measles, his corncrib has burned up, his oldest son is in jail and his wife has eloped with a travellin' man, but outside of that he is gettin' along fair to middlin'.

The neighbor will soon call upon you. To borrow your lawnmower and hoe. The mailman will leave on the doorstep. The seed catalogue you well know.

You'll soon have to take down the stormhouse. And spend a week fitting the screens. And mark off a space in the backyard for radishes, melons and beans.

You'll take the good old sulphur tonic. The ice man will pound on your door. You'll get fifteen vacation folders. And spring will be with you once more.

According to Uncle Abner. Now that they have found microbes

Abe Martin



There's no horn on th' water wagon. I don't know whether Tell Binkley drinks or not, but he's mighty remindin' of it. Wuz'n worth as much 't live in th' good old days.

Voice of the People

Would Lift Mrs. Floyd Allen's Mortgage.
To the Editor of The Times-Dispatch:—Sir,—I note in a Richmond paper that a fund is being raised to build a monument to Lloyd and Claude Swanson Allen, and in the same issue it is stated that the home place of Mrs. Floyd Allen is being mortgaged. I believe nearly every citizen of Virginia feels the deepest sympathy for this afflicted lady, and regardless of how they may view the merits of this case so far as the merits of the Allen family, we can all agree on a sympathetic feeling for raising a fund to pay off this mortgage and providing an annuity for this aged woman, who has shared a few hard years of life in the State of Virginia. I am sure that all citizens of Virginia feel the deepest sympathy for this afflicted lady, and regardless of how they may view the merits of this case so far as the merits of the Allen family, we can all agree on a sympathetic feeling for raising a fund to pay off this mortgage and providing an annuity for this aged woman, who has shared a few hard years of life in the State of Virginia. I am sure that all citizens of Virginia feel the deepest sympathy for this afflicted lady, and regardless of how they may view the merits of this case so far as the merits of the Allen family, we can all agree on a sympathetic feeling for raising a fund to pay off this mortgage and providing an annuity for this aged woman, who has shared a few hard years of life in the State of Virginia. 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